Epping School District COVID Plan

2021-2022 School Year
Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic and its global spread in 2020 has been unprecedented and impacted schools around the world. It has forced re-evaluation and changes to almost all our operational and educational practices. Our students, families, staff and community have demonstrated incredible resilience during this time. We have had great success with offering in-person learning four days a week all last year. In order to prepare our schools for the 21-22 school year we continue to use the latest CDC and DPHS guidance. We understand that guidance is not yet available for three months out this is our plan based on data, feedback, review of current health and operational guidelines, and draft the best possible plan to meet the various needs of Epping Schools. We know that any plan needs to be flexible given the changing conditions of this global pandemic. While the opening of school undoubtedly has inherent risks, the planning for this school year has been focused on mitigating those risks in multiple ways and offering in-person learning to the greatest extent possible. Our COVID Plan is the work of its 33 task members. This work could not have been completed without the effort of each and every member and their ability to focus on a solution that best meets the needs of the Epping students, staff, and community.
Members of the Epping School District Reopening Task Force

Bill Furbush, Superintendent
Dave Mylott, School Board Vice Chair
Heather Clark, School Board Member
Bonnie Sandstrom, Business Administrator
Brenden Collins, Interim Technology Director
Joe Parzych, Facilities Director
Cathy Zylinski, Director of Student Services
Heather Cantagallo, EES Principal
Brian Ernest, MS/HS Principal
Sarah Wagner, School Psychologist
Sandra Rowe, First Student Bus Company
Joy Page, Epping Teacher Union President
Debbie Jankowsky, EES Teacher
Rachael Pattee, EES Teacher
Meghan Young, EES Nurse

Amy Newman, EMS-EHS Teacher
Sean Meagher, EMS-EHS Teacher
Melanie Friese, EHS Teacher
Joanne McCann, EHS Teacher
Karen Mongeon, EES Admin Assistant
Ellen Needham, EMS Admin Assistant
Tracy Bell, EHS Admin Assistant
Heather Charkowski, EES Parent
Nicole Kukesh, EES Parent
Romaine Wishart, EMS Parent
Nicole Bizzaro, EMS Parent
Jordenne Sargent, EHS Parent
Shana McTague, EHS Parent
Cameron Wishart, EMS Student
Sunni Newman, EMS Student
Austin Clark, EHS Student
Emily Kelly, EHS Student
Guiding Principles

Safety First

In-person Instruction

Community Impact

★ Safety first. The safety of our students, faculty, and community is our highest priority. Public health guidance, COVID-19 data, and school transmission rates will determine the movement between phases in this framework.

★ In-person instruction. Students deserve the best public education we can provide them while maintaining their safety. For many students in-person learning is the best mode to meet their social and academic needs and remote learning is not always the best option for all students.

★ Community impact. Returning to school is an important factor to support economic recovery as parents need the ability to work. Expecting parents to continue providing childcare and remote learning support during work hours is not sustainable or healthy for our parents.
Guiding Principles

Weighing the Risks

Fluid Framework

Equity Lens

★ **Weighing the risks.** It is important to establish precautionary measures to minimize risk where possible, including asymptomatic transmission during this highly dynamic public health crisis.

★ **Framework needs to be fluid.** That means having the ability to transition from a remote learning model off-site to a phased-in approach to safely open our schools as we progress through the phases. It may be necessary to progress or regress through the phases as public health conditions change.

★ **Equity lens.** This COVID plan framework must support educational equity for all students, and ensure that our most vulnerable students receive the supports necessary for their success, particularly in a remote instruction environment.
The following chart outlines five phases of our COVID plan. Recognizing how conditions of the pandemic may change, the phases are designed to be able to move from one phase to another with the least disruption to the continuity of student learning. Given the current general conditions, we anticipate opening Epping Schools in Phase 4 on August 30, 2021. However, this recommendation will be revisited throughout the summer if general conditions change. Throughout the school year this will be re-evaluated by reviewing local health conditions, regional health conditions, local safety officials, and guidance from NH DHHS.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE</th>
<th>GENERAL CONDITIONS</th>
<th>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Governor’s Stay at Home order in effect</td>
<td>Five day student week</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significant local escalation of the pandemic</td>
<td>All students are home</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students access learning through remote instruction only</td>
<td>Students access learning through remote instruction only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Remote Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHASE</td>
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| **Phase 2**   | *Transmission within school buildings or school activities has been identified to a great extent*  
Social distancing to the maximum extent possible  
Social distancing requirement of 6+ feet whenever possible  
Required limits on physical capacity of classrooms and buildings  
Little to no physical student interaction  
Face masks/shields required by all students and staff indoors  
Health Screening at all entrances  
High frequency of hygiene and disinfection protocols | Five day student week  
Teachers deliver instruction remotely  
Vulnerable populations receive support services and interventions in school classrooms - students identified by school  
All remaining students access remote learning at home |
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| Phase 3               | *Multiple cases of transmission within school buildings or school activities has been identified*  
Social distancing to the maximum extent possible  
Face masks/shields required for all students and staff when 3’ feet social distancing not possible  
Home screening protocols  
Hygiene and disinfection protocols | Five day student week  
Teachers deliver instruction in person  
Daily class schedules close to normal with some movement modifications  
Limited student interaction to comply with social distancing, i.e. students sit individually not in groups  
Scheduled use of outdoor or alternative space to allow for movement and mask breaks  
Limited remote options given to parents not comfortable sending their student to school (See Phase 3-5 Remote Options) |
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<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>Return with Limited Restrictions</td>
<td>School schedules as normal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No evidence of transmission within school buildings or school activities has been</td>
<td>Classroom instruction with limited social distancing restrictions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>identified</td>
<td>Current mask guidance of 5.15.21 is to wear masks in mixed vaccinated groups and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Social distancing to the maximum extent possible</td>
<td>large number of unvaccinated students</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- PPE To be determined by DPHS guidance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal hygiene protocols encouraged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>Full Return with No Restrictions</td>
<td>School schedules as normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No School Transmission</td>
<td>Classroom instruction with no restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No social distancing recommendation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No PPE required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal hygiene encouraged</td>
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**Phases 4 and 5 of COVID Plan**
Phase 3-5, would provide limited remote options for students. The remote option may be a combination of at-home learning and in-person learning. Due to scheduling limitations, stand-alone online platforms (such as VLACS and APEX) will be used.

If the VLACS or APEX remote option is chosen, we require a two week transition notification in order to successfully transition a student to in-person learning. While we want to be as flexible as possible for all families, we are unable to move students in and out of VLACS and APEX remote learning at will. VLACS is the top choice for remote learning as it offers more support and guidance than APEX. APEX is available to all students who wish to either supplement their in-person curriculum or have an approved APEX plan by the guidance department and administration. If a child is not being successful with APEX learning a return to in-person learning will be required.

Synchronous teaching is not being offered as part of the 2021-2022 COVID plan.
There is intensive ongoing work throughout the summer by various groups to prepare for all the specific areas of a successful school opening. This work is well underway and informed by previous parent, student and staff surveys, and feedback from the 20-21 school year. Thank you to all who continue to provide feedback and remain invested in this process. Together we will create and provide the best possible educational opportunities and setting for the students of Epping.